

*draft not sent*  
*col. Beards*  
*decided to proceed*  
*asherman*  
*u-2 file*

Copy 1 of 10

3 October 1961

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director of Central Intelligence

VIA: Deputy Director (Plans)  
Acting Chief, Developments Projects Division

SUBJECT: Approval for U-2 Coverage of North Vietnam  
(with permission to "stray" into South China)

REFERENCE: Minutes of Special Group Meeting  
28 September 1961 (COR-1362)

1. This memorandum contains a recommendation for approval in paragraph 8.

2. The Special Group on 28 September decided as follows:

"The Group finally agreed that another U-2 flight should be mounted over North Vietnam to supplement the information received in August, and that this flight could be authorized to "stray" across the border so as to obtain oblique photography of key airfields in China near the border."

3. The only paper prepared by the Committee on Overhead Reconnaissance before the Special Group on this occasion relates to this subject was the recommendation for coverage of China mainland with special and immediate emphasis being given to certain targets on Hainan Island and those relatively near the South China border which are of importance in judging the military buildup in the Indochina situation (see attached copy, [redacted])

**TOP SECRET**

**TAD SECRET**

Declassified in Part - Sanitized Copy Approved for Release 2012/02/28 : CIA-RDP79B01709A001700020046-3

25X1

4. The minutes note that at the meeting "It was also brought out that U-2 coverage of North Vietnam in August was not complete enough, due to cloud cover." The COMOR has re-examined the requirements in North Vietnam and they are as stated in paragraph 6 below and as shown on the attached map.

25X1

5. About a month ago the COMOR submitted through channels to the Special Group requirements for the coverage of Laos, requirements of highest importance to the U. S. Army because of its responsibility in the area. These requirements were returned by [redacted] with the statement that the Special Group had already approved other capabilities than the U-2 to meet the Army's requirements in the area. After an investigation it was learned that the reported approved reconnaissance was <sup>CONFIRMED</sup> to about one hundred square miles in and around Vang Vieng in Laos. We have just learned that [redacted] has submitted four areas in South Vietnam for which Chief/Mag/Laos has photo requirements. DPD/Operations has the capability to obtain this photography with B-26s under its control in the area and furthermore considers that it has approval for obtaining such reconnaissance. If this is so, then U-2 coverage on those areas would not be required.

25X1

25X1

6. In the light of the Special Group's approval, it would appear that the major objective is North Vietnam and the coverage of requirements in South China incidentally. As a matter of fact, the most pressing requirements of the community are to cover those targets remaining in Hainan (2), not covered in [redacted] the targets immediately north of South China border which relate to the Communist Chinese military support capability and in Laos. The attached map shows the priority requirements in North Vietnam and Laos, and North Vietnam. These targets are critical for appraising Communist activities in

25X1

- a. Resumption of operations in Laos and
- b. Support of new Communist attacks on South Vietnam.

Within these targets as outlined those point and area targets in Laos are highest priority; those in North Vietnam south of Vinh second priority; and those in North Vietnam from Hanoi to Vinh are third in importance. It is not as critical to cover the rail lines from Hanoi northeast and northwest to the South China border, although such coverage if it could be obtained would be significant in terms of Communist China resupply problems, and therefore, desirable.

25X1

**TAD SECRET**

Declassified in Part - Sanitized Copy Approved for Release 2012/02/28 : CIA-RDP79B01709A001700020046-3

**TAD SECRET**

25X1

7. To sum up:

a. There is now Special Group approval for one U-2 flight over North Vietnam "straying" into South China.

b. We have stated requirements in Southeast Asia in this order of importance--South China and Hainan Island, Laos, and southern North Vietnam.

c. It is necessary in order to meet these requirements to have at least two U-2 missions.

8. Recommendation: It is recommended that <sup>the</sup> U-2 ~~missions~~ be authorized to ~~make the flights which are outlined on the attached~~ ~~map.~~ *missions as required to accomplish the objective outlined on the attached map.*

James Q. Reber  
Chairman  
Committee on Overhead Reconnaissance

Attachment:

1--Map

2--

25X1

CONCUR:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Deputy Director Date  
(Plans)

The recommendation contained in paragraph 8 is approved:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Acting Chief, DPD-DDP Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Director of Central Intelligence

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Copy 1--C/SRS  
2--DCI  
3--DDP  
4--AC/DPD  
5--C/SRS  
6--C/SRS  
7--C/SRS  
8--C/SRS  
9--C/SRS  
10--C/SRS

25X1.

**TAD SECRET**